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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES

BRIEFING

EDITORIAL OPINION

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Syria Begins Historic Withdrawal from Lebanon - Sabah  
Syrian Troops in Lebanon Start Packing - Hurriyet  
Turkey Calls on Syria to Pull Out of Lebanon - Milliyet  
Sgrena Claims US Troops Wanted to Kill Her - Sabah  
Iraq Terror Pushes Arabs to Kurdish Region to Seek Jobs -  
Aksam  
EU Urges Croatia to Hand Over War Crimes Suspect - Hurriyet  
Hans Bethe, Father of the A-Bomb, Dies at 98 - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

Talabani: Turkey Supports a Federal Iraq - Cumhuriyet  
US Diplomats Receive Survival Training Before Tour in  
Baghdad - Hurriyet  
Insurgency in Iraq Helps Boost Kurds' Economy - Zaman  
Rage Against the US in Italy - Radikal  
Assad, Lahud Agree: Syria Begins Lebanon Pullback -  
Cumhuriyet  
Syria to Complete Lebanon Pullback By Late March - Zaman  
Turkey Pleased By Syrian Withdrawal - Yeni Safak  
Helsinki Report: Anti-Muslim Sentiment on the Rise -  
Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Poll Says Bush Policies Responsible for Anti-Americanism in Turkey: Research by opposition CHP lawmaker Bulent Tanla purportedly showed that anti-American sentiment in Turkey has risen due to policies carried out by President Bush, papers report. The opinion poll was conducted among 1,200 Turks in 73 provinces in late February. The reasons for anti-Americanism in Turkey were ranked as follows: US attitudes against Turkey's interests and 'expansionist' US policies: 36 percent; US policies toward Islam/Muslims: 27 percent; US' 'aggressive' policies and Americans' intention to dominate the international arena: 14 percent; US war against Iraq and US policies in the Middle East and Israel: 10 percent; concerns about Iran and Syria: 13 percent. Tanla said the responsibility for reversing the anti-American trend in Turkey falls primarily on the US Administration, and voiced hope that 'reasonable' people in the United States will evaluate these facts correctly. Tanla also criticized a recent BBC global poll that showed 82 percent of Turks as being anti-American, saying it did not reflect the actual situation in Turkey today. 'Anti-American sentiment is on the rise in Turkey in recent years, but it is neither at the level shown in the BBC poll nor reflects a feeling of enmity towards the United States,' he stressed.

US Ankara Embassy Holds Anti-Americanism Seminar:

University of Virginia Professor of Political Science James I.W. Caesar told an audience of journalists and academics in a seminar held Monday by the US Embassy in Ankara that anti-Americanism has deep historical and intellectual roots in Europe, "Zaman" reports. Caesar said the reasons behind current anti-American sentiment include anti-globalization and the association of the US with the globalization phenomenon, opposition to technological advancement, and a dislike for the powerful. During the Cold War, Caesar argued, some European intellectuals perceived the US and Russia as a kind of 'Axis of Evil.' Caesar chastised many critics of the United States for spreading anti-American views despite never having traveled in America.

EU Slams Ankara for Police Violence in Istanbul: In a joint statement issued ahead of a meeting between the EU Troika and Turkish officials in Ankara on Monday, EU representatives -- President of the EU Council Jean Asselborn, Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn, and British Minister for Europe Denis MacShane -- expressed

concern over the use of 'disproportionate force' against a group demonstrating in Istanbul in connection with International Women's Day. The EU officials asked the Turkish authorities to carry out an investigation into the incident. They said they were 'shocked by the images of police beating women and young people demonstrating in Istanbul last weekend.' FM Abdullah Gul promised a full investigation into the incident, and said Turkey remained fully committed to meeting all EU norms. 63 people were detained when riot police quashed the demonstration Sunday in Istanbul. Footage broadcast on TV channels showed officers using truncheons and pepper gas against the protestors and hauling them onto buses. FM Gul and government spokesman and Justice Minister Cemil Cicek carefully avoided criticizing the police. PM Tayyip Erdogan said that 'freedoms have their limits' and noted that six policemen were injured in the women's demonstration. 'There is not a country in the world where demonstrators can choose the time, place, and form of their demonstration,' Erdogan said. The EU Troika also urged Turkey to fully implement all human rights reforms, including a 'zero tolerance' policy on torture and full property rights for non-Muslim religious groups.

**EU Suggests International Investigation Into Armenian 'Genocide' Claims:** EU representatives suggested an investigation of Armenian genocide claims by an international organization such as the United Nations, "Milliyet" reports. On Monday, EU Troika officials said that increasing allegations of 'genocide' of Armenians by Ottoman forces during World War One are negatively affecting Ankara's EU bid. The paper also claims that Ankara signaled to EU officials its intention to sign the Customs Union agreement with the EU within the next few weeks. Both EU and Turkish officials have made clear that signing the protocol does not amount to recognition of the Republic of Cyprus.

**HRW Says Turkey Misled EU on Resettlement of Displaced Kurds:** Human Rights Watch (HRW) said on Monday that the government of Turkey had exaggerated the number of people returning to their villages in the mainly Kurdish southeast of the country last year. A HRW report said Ankara's claim that one-third of nearly 400,000 refugees displaced by fighting between the army and Kurdish separatists in the 1980s and 1990s had returned home was 'not credible.' The report said a HRW investigation showed that the real number was less than a fifth of official estimates. It said many villagers were reluctant to return because their homes and villages had been destroyed. HRW accused 'village guards' of killing returnees in some parts of southeast Turkey, and urged a visiting EU delegation to raise the issue in talks with Ankara.

**Turkey Welcomes Syria's Pledge for Lebanon Pullback:** The Turkish Foreign Ministry said on Monday that although Turkey has a close and constructive dialogue with its neighbors Syria and Lebanon, 'Turkey supports rapid implementation of resolution 1559 of the UN Security Council.' The MFA statement added that it is necessary to hold parliamentary elections in Lebanon in April in a democratic atmosphere in which Lebanese people can freely express their political will. 'We are pleased that the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon will begin today and that Syrian and Lebanese officials will meet in Damascus to discuss the pullout,' the statement continued.

**Talabani: Turkey Supports a Federal Iraq:** Northern Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) leader Jalal Talabani told "Kurd-Sat TV" that Turkey supports a federal structure in Iraq. 'Our Turkish brothers said they support a federal Iraq,' Talabani said, referring to a recent meeting with Turkey's special representative, Osman Koruturk, held in Dokan, Suleymaniye.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION: The Syrian Pull Out

"**Losing Both the Middle East and the EU**" Cengiz Candar commented in the conservative "DB Tercuman" (3/8): "The Turkish statement regarding the Syrian pullout from Lebanon came rather belatedly. The timing of the statement is also interesting, in that it was issued 48 hours after the Syrian President's announcement of a withdrawal. It seems that Ankara was trying to do a favor to Assad, who also happens to be a 'beloved leader' in the eyes of the Turkish Foreign Minister. . The entire world including the US, the EU and the Arab League -- but not Turkey - has been giving the same message to Damascus on the need to pull Syrian forces out of Lebanon. As one foreign statesman suggested, Turkey could soon be put into the same category as Syria, Iran, and Sudan unless the recent statements from Ankara begin to change. One clear example has already been in the news: Turkey was not invited to the London conference to take part in the discussion of the Palestinian issue. . It seems that Turkey, through its

repeated mistakes and wrong-headed Middle East policies, is losing not only the Middle East, but the EU as well."

"Is the Problem Over?"

Sami Kohen commented in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (3/8):  
"Is it possible to believe that the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon will ease international concerns or end the problem? First, there needs to be a clear definition of what the problem is. At first glance, it seems rather simple: the people of Lebanon want Syrian military forces to leave the country, and the international community supports this. Syrian President Assad has agreed to pull out Syrian forces from Lebanon. Yet the issue is much more complicated than this. First of all, the Lebanese people are demanding an immediate and full withdrawal rather than a gradual or partial one. This increases the risk that Lebanon could be carried into a new period of instability. There is also a Syrian angle to the issue -- is the decision to withdraw going to end the international pressure on Damascus? Will the US, in particular, stop its efforts to effect a regime change in Syria? That possibility has the potential to create new tensions in the region. The agreement reached between Syria and Lebanon reflects the success of the Lebanese people and Lebanese democracy. But the US strategy appears to be an effort to wear down the Assad Administration. The Bush Administration now hopes that the winds of democracy will reach all the way to Damascus. Washington seems to be ready to manipulate this. But there is always the danger that this could pave the way for new conflicts and tensions in the region."

EDELMAN